

WOMEN MUST EXPRESS BEAUTY AND MEN STRENGTH

The Oldest Living Poet Among American Women Can See Nothing Really Great That Her Sex Has Ever Done--She Believes in Divorce, but Not in Haphazard Connections.

By Barbara Bindley.

ELLA WHEELER WILCOX'S name as a poet is a household word in the United States, yet the greatest thing that success has brought her is the worth of her name for job-hunters, she says.

She is sixty-two years old, this poet, whose cheeks have the soft freshness of baby skin, whose spotted brown eyes are timid and appealing as a child's, whose golden hair is just beginning to be shot with gray, and she gave me for women the essence of the philosophy that much living, high thinking, great feeling and the power to express it had brought her. "I would rather feel I had achieved something that enabled my name to be valuable in getting an entrance for young people needing opportunity than that I've done something that a lot of people are clapping and clacking over," she says, although Mrs. Wilcox voiced a philosophy of independence as far as she was concerned, and for others too. Many and wide are her interests, and in an interview of hours' length she discussed everything from haphazard human relations to what she thinks our greatest need--ideal home-making.

"I have gone my way alone," the little gentle voiced woman began. "I found my road and walked it alone and am glad I did. And, looking back, every sorrow, every unfaithfulness, has been worth while, because it taught me not to lean on human appreciation, and not to work for gratitude and applause; that the pleasure of doing work was its reason."

"This, my philosophy of life, to make the very utmost of myself, my possibilities and my environment as a woman. And I never want to be anything else but a woman, because it's a glorious thing to be." And yet Mrs. Wilcox ascribes to man the great achievements of the world and says they belong to his realm eternally.

Women have not really done a great thing, she maintains, not even excepting Sappho. The best milliners, cooks, etc., are men; women have not the creative gift.

"I like men to do the biggest things, woman the decorative things. No woman has discovered a continent, engineered a canal, built bridges or made a ship, and I don't want her to. Woman should do the beautiful things only, because she was meant to be the expression of beauty, man of strength. No woman's movement will ever change that--it is her purpose in life."

"By this I do not mean woman is inferior to man. She is different. Nor is it a question of advantage in years. Women must perfect themselves on woman's lines. If I had a daughter I would not want her to be a great scholar, rather a linguist or a musician--or all or any of the things that make for a beautiful social life. She could be helpful to many people so."

"And woman doesn't have to be a 'new woman.' She wants to realize that she can be the best old woman that ever lived."

"In other words you want perfect balance?" "Yes. I want the weight of the world's beauty and work, between men and women, to be equalized, though different in kind in each sex."

"Woman must be the helpmeet. She may develop her talents outside the home. If she chooses to be a wage earner all right, so long as she co-operates and co-ordinates that to the life within her four walls. And so with suffrage too." Mrs. Wilcox believes we will attain race betterment only through ideal homes. Yet we should have individualism there. No two homes should be alike, except in the rush

of love with which we regard them.

"Those persons haven't touched the hem of happiness who haven't put away the dangers of haphazard connections and consecrated themselves to one love. All men and women of any positive power have opportunities for promiscuous experiences. Yet we call women of ability temperamental when they yield to such experiences, an ordinary thing to do, the results of which are cheap. Only women who put those things aside rise to an understanding of the highest happiness."

"Even men don't sow wild oats as they used to. They are criticized too much now. And it is women who have raised the standard, who have demanded more of men. And the women who are sowing wild oats are finding it a crop that doesn't market well."

Yet Mrs. Wilcox believes in divorce from impossible unions. She disapproves of feminism wherever it makes the value of the home secondary and lacking in the feminine love touch.

"Home is not the place where people only sleep or eat," she explains. "No matter how perfectly appointed the building, that place is not home which a man and woman do not enter with a rush of love when they open the door; that's the ideal home, and the test of one."

"The development of women in the last fif-



Ella Wheeler Wilcox, who at sixty-two defines home as a place where man and woman enter with a rush of love every time they open the door.

As a Theosophist, She Thinks the War a Purgative for Degenerate Europe and Looks to America, and Southern California in Particular, for a New, Clean Art.

teen years has been most wonderful. They show the biggest spirit toward one another. They are no longer spiteful about one another's clothes, beauty or achievements. The jest about woman's cattiness has ceased to have point any longer. The narrow, fashionable woman still persists in this type of mind, but she, too, is decreasing, because even the smart set is restiers to be doing things also.

"Yet I am terribly opposed to woman's development at the expense of the world. Those women who are ready to fling all to the winds to express themselves are at the other extreme of the pendulum, like a woman I know who expressed herself through having three husbands and three sets of children scattered through the country."

"Woman will gain her best expression by doing what is right, what is nearest her that needs the doing. That is the standard by which we climb to better things. We must weed our own gardens. Our own homes must be the centre of that broader life of the world. "Our greatest need is for women to realize the wonderful power and interest in ideal home-making, the ideal home characterized by taste, cheerfulness, entertainment and rest. We did not even have it in the old generations."

Of course we talked of the Great War, and

Mrs. Wilcox startled me by her calm assertion that the theosophists--she a professed one--foresaw the war and regard it tolerantly as purgative of Europe's spiritual ills.

"Theosophy is the entire explanation of life. It foresaw the war. The nearest to the millennium that we can imagine will come as a result of the war, because just as health and strength and vitality come to one after illness, so the world is now purging itself of the virus of greed, love of power, etc. The cleansing fire will hold us back for at least one hundred years, if not more."

"Ye must achieve a higher spirituality; the hateful old orthodoxy in religion must go; the clannish spirit, the creeds, all must meet in a new universal religion, so that the Christ spirit in each individual may predominate, no matter what his race or creed."

"The new race composed of supermen and superwomen can develop only when we reach a broader and more humanitarian standard of religious conduct--that of living in agreeable, kindly relations with all your fellow men, even your competitors."

"The great movements of the next hundred years will have their birth in America. Europe has misused its power, and its ruin came because it is egotistical, intolerant, degenerate in all of its arts. All of this is going to start in a clean way in our country."

"As a nation we are already growing in appreciation. We are more poetic than we ever were. Everything will come in the line of art. Painting has developed in the last decade; music is already in its morning."

"All these fruitions will come to their greatest unfolding in Southern California, which will be the centre of the greatest spiritual development the world has ever known. That chosen spot will be the home of great seers, teachers, adepts, masters, who will leave their impress upon the world. Why? Because of its climate, for one thing, and the spiritual indications we theosophists foresee."

And then back to her life and to women, her sisters, for now that women are so intent on growing they would analyze this one's acknowledged achievements and see their mental motor forces.

"I have but touched the outer edges of the possibilities I dwell among," Mrs. Wilcox confessed. "The rapid rush of the years passing by have made me realize how much I could have done had I but realized that they were mine, but perhaps that, too, was not possible. My failures have led me to this realization."

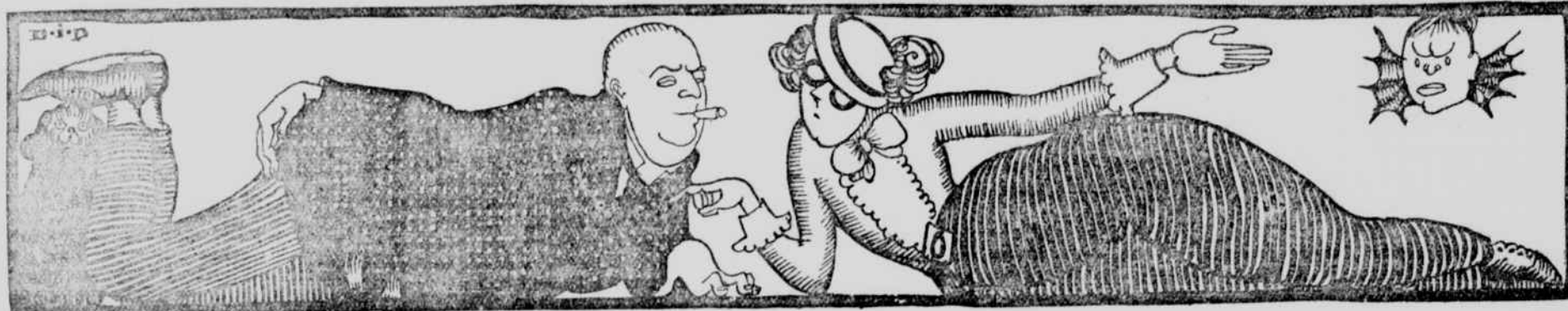
"So many girls and women write me praying for my influence to make them successful writers. They don't need help. It lies in one's self. Given certain ideals, aspirations, ambitions--the word is used mistakenly--ambitions need not be selfish--never lose sight of the fact that you have it in yourself."

"Take an inventory of your possibilities and probabilities. A little pygmy in stature should not aim to play the role of an Amazon, but should have the resolution to make herself the most complete and powerful pygmy in the world. But a pygmy must not delude herself into thinking herself big, for her very self-obsession will make her always mediocre."

"The young woman starting out must not take too seriously the praise of the world. My idea of the purpose of life is not to have power, fame or wealth, but to give back to the Creator those talents bestowed upon me improved and perfected, and whoever does that has influence on other lives for good, and who attains to worth-while success, her spirit is enlarged."

Are Women People?

By ALICE DUER MILLER



THE UNCONSCIOUS SUFFRAGIST.

Among our men in politics
There was no other could compare
For wisdom, weight and subtle tricks
With Robert Maximilian Haire.

He was the star of public life,
Committed to the people's cause,
Young, rich, devoted to his wife,
And not too fond of making laws.

From each and every suffragist
Haire would receive appeals impassioned,
But he would always say: "Desist,
I am a little bit old-fashioned;

"Women! I think too good, too pure,
Too sensitive and high of aim
For politics; I feel quite sure
They'd find it far too low a game."

"I'd rather see you women dead,"
He said, and felt it quite a lot, too;
In fact, he meant just what he said,
Which all who talk like this do not do.

The suffragists replied to such
Fine words with things there are to say,
But as Haire did not listen much,
They thought it wise to go away.

Scarce had they gone in deep distress,
When in another lady came,
Tall, very tailor-made in dress,
Miss Zilla Lanpher was her name.

An anti-suffragist was she,
She said: there seemed no ground to doubt her,
Although Haire was surprised to see
No feminine allure about her.

She said: "A clever man like you
Will hardly need this information
Of silly things that women do
When they mix up in legislation."

"They lack all sense and self-control,
They cannot learn--the fault is deeper;
A woman who would sell her soul
Will hold her vote, believe me, cheaper."

"Women are petty and untrue,
And treacherous as any cat,
Unwise, corrupt, vindictive, too!"
"Good lands," cried Haire, "are you like that?"

"Am I?" she cried. "Why, can't you see
I'm of a very different breed?
I'm just as different as can be.
Like other women? No, indeed!

"I have some common sense, some poise,
Some power to organize and plan.
My education was a boy's,
My mental grasp is like a man."

"And so, of course, I sympathize
(And simple pride lit up her features)
With clever men, who must despise
The clamor of these childish creatures."

Haire, who had sat there like the sphinx,
Now suddenly spoke out: "Desist!
If that's what Anti-Suffrage thinks
Of women, I'm a suffragist."

WHERE THE SPOTLIGHT STRIKES IN THE WORLD OF WOMEN



MME. OCTAVE HOMBERG, wife of the representative of the French Treasury to the United States, comes to New York in a spirit of gratitude to the American people for what they are doing for French relief, which, she says, has been one of the most wonderful demonstrations of humanity in the whole war.

Mme. Homberg is also enthusiastic in her liking for America's greatest city, and feels, too, that the great strain which the war has put upon her may be a bit relieved by our gay, "fascinating city."

"Paris is not triste," she says, "but so quiet and sober. Your New York gives one confidence again, the confidence that somewhere the ordinary things, the beautiful things, are the real things. For in our country we have only the horrible war for an outlook, and that is really too terrible."



MME. ERNEST MALLET, wife of the director of the Banque de France, is at present in New York with the Anglo-French finance commission.

"I am not an ardent believer in 'votes for women,'" she says, "but I think, were I an American, I might be. The European woman still retains her greatest power over the affairs of men purely by home influence. The sphere of the American woman, on the contrary, lies chiefly outside her household, and she therefore needs political power."

"Nobody can conceive," she continues, "of the energetic aid given by the American women of Paris to our stricken country. With what unselfishness they have worked! Certainly they are the most practical women in the world, and therefore most capable at such a crisis as this."



BELLE DA COSTA GREENE perhaps the most important art connoisseur in America!

"Yes," she smilingly says, "I preside over the library, where so many epoch making meetings have been held by the late J. P. Morgan and his son, the present J. P. Morgan. For instance, the meeting for the panic of 1907; the present international financial crisis, when the greatest international loan ever contemplated is being worked out."

"My lifework?" "That has been to form for the late Mr. Morgan his art collection."

This, everybody knows, is one of the biggest and most valuable in the world. So, after all, women have performed some of the important deeds of the world!



IDA SEDGWICK PROPER is chairman of press and publicity art of the Empire State Campaign Committee, in which position she was placed not only for her enthusiasm for politics, and "therefore suffrage," but because as a painter of figures out of doors and mural decorations she has achieved her share of name and fame.

"What of variety I don't put into my painting I apply to suffrage," she says. "Yes, I'd go to jail for suffrage. It means democracy to me; men have fought with swords and blood for democracy, haven't they?"

Miss Proper just now, however, is busy with a non-militant enterprise--the suffrage art exhibit, which is to be held at the Macbeth Galleries September 27 to October 17, where sixty paintings and drawings and fifty pieces of sculpture by prominent artists will be exhibited and sold, the contributors and suffrage to divide the proceeds.



MRS. CHARLES B. VANDERBECK has played golf persistently enough and well enough to win a few golf titles this season--several weeks ago the championship of the Woman's Eastern Golf Association and now that of the woman's national championship tournament, which was held at Forest Hills, Ill. Mrs. Vanderbeck hails from Philadelphia and from a club that values her playing very highly--the Philadelphia Cricket Club.

After winning over Miss Alexa Stirling, the seventeen-year-old Southern woman champion from Atlanta, in a close match, Mrs. Vanderbeck met her final opponent, Mrs. W. A. Gavin, from the Shirley Park Club, England. Mrs. Gavin, with all the traditions of English golf behind her, drove too short and putted too long to overcome the sure, steady strokes of the American woman, who came out victorious in a tournament of the best women golfers in the athletic world.